

This must be what they were talking about.

Subject: This must be what they were talking about.

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This was in today's Curbed LA, SP has some red but there is a lot to go around...

How Los Angeles plans to make its streets less deadly

[4 comments](#)

LA's rate of traffic deaths is higher than any other U.S. city's

LADOT

Every 40 hours, a person is killed on streets in the city of Los Angeles, a total of 260 people per year. It's a chilling statistic that makes the city the deadliest [for traffic deaths](#) in the U.S. New goals for Vision Zero, LA's plan to eliminate traffic fatalities by 2025, call for lowering the number of deaths by 20 percent this year.

The plan, which was [published today](#), outlines the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's first strategy for the agency's [Vision Zero](#) initiative. (You can view an [interactive version here](#).) The initiative was launched in 2015 as part of a worldwide [movement to reduce traffic deaths](#).

Last year, the number of [traffic deaths](#) soared in LA and nationwide after years of decline. That was [due to many factors](#), including an all-time record of vehicle-miles driven nationwide. So to shoot for reducing deaths by 20 percent represented a big setback for LA's Vision Zero, said LADOT general manager Seleta Reynolds.

"The truth is that to get to a 20 percent reduction in 2017, it just means getting back to 2015 levels," she said.

LA Traffic Deaths

2016 total deaths: 260

2015 total deaths: 186

2016 pedestrian deaths: 116

2015 pedestrian deaths: 88

2016 bicyclist deaths: 22

2015 bicyclist deaths: 16

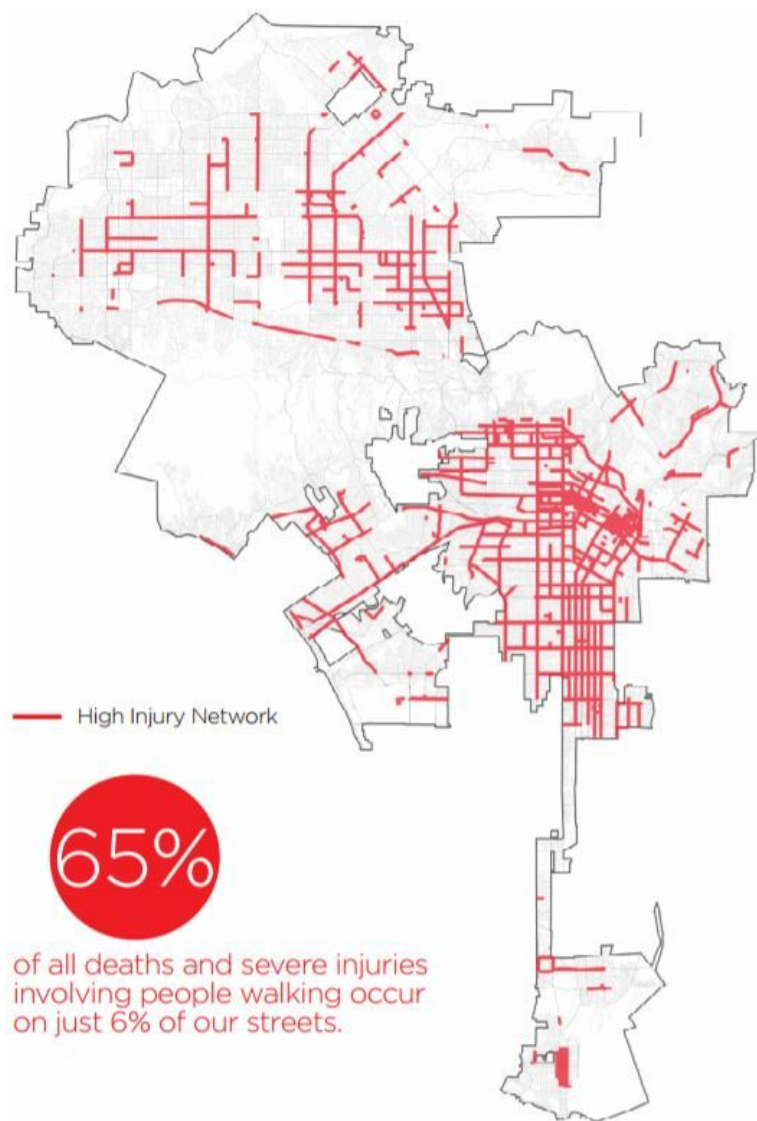
Data provided by LADOT. Traffic deaths include all modes of transportation: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, drivers, and passengers.

The increase in deaths meant rethinking Vision Zero's approach. The traditional road safety strategy focuses on four key areas: engineering, enforcement, education, and evaluation. LADOT is not abandoning that strategy, but it is taking a more holistic look at safety.

"We're changing the way that we think about our approach to safety ... it requires transportation engineers to think like public health advocates," said Reynolds. "That's what this really gets at: culture change."

One takeaway that LADOT learned from San Francisco's Vision Zero efforts is that large-scale intersection-based interventions like the [crash-reducing pedestrian scramble at Hollywood and Highland](#) only really work at intersections like Hollywood and Highland, where you have extremely high volume. For more impact in less-busy intersections, changes have to target the entire dangerous corridor.

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LADOT has already isolated its most dangerous corridors as part of its “[high-injury network](#)” initiative—a data-driven approach to find the city’s deadliest streets. Using this data, LADOT will shift its efforts from specific intersections to the 40 deadliest corridors, said Reynolds. “We’re taking 40 focus corridors and throwing everything we have at those corridors to see a reduction in injuries,” she said. That includes prioritizing ones by schools; traffic deaths are now the leading cause of death for children in LA.

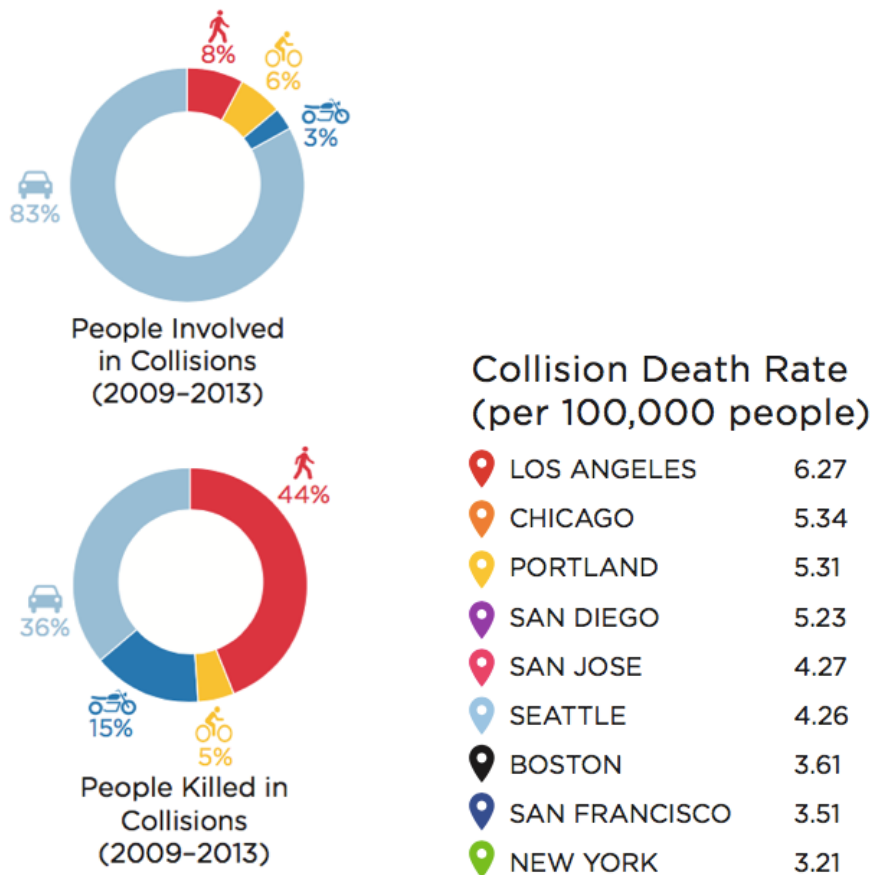
2017 Vision Zero grants

Community groups on team	Corridor of focus
Multicultural Communities for Mobility, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, LA Commons	Hoover between Vernon and Manchester
Multicultural Communities for Mobility, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, LA Commons	Crenshaw between Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Vernon
Cornerstone, Power to Pedal, Dignity Health	Vernon between Western and Central
Los Angeles Walks, Gabba Gallery, Pilipino Workers Center, Public Matters	Temple between Beverly and Beaudry
Ave 50, Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative	N. Figueroa between Avenue 43 and York
Central City Neighborhood Partners	Alvarado between 6th and 7th
C.I.C.L.E., Blacklist, Alan Nakagawa	Pico between Western and Union
Pacoima Beautiful, Leyna, Kaiser, Cottonwood	Roscoe between Van Nuys and Woodman
LA-Más, PESA	Adams between Hauser and Crenshaw

The focus on corridors instead of intersections also introduces a new way for LADOT to do community outreach. A series of Vision Zero grants totaling \$310,000 were awarded to local groups that have recommended creative safety improvements along eight of the high-injury corridors.

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This initiative, as well as the [Great Streets Challenge grants](#) issued by the mayor’s office, allows residents to take ownership of safety improvements. “We’re investing in strong community organizers—these are the influencers who are already doing all the hard work,” said Reynolds. These improvements will do double duty as public art programs, economic development efforts, and beautification projects. One area the action plan emphasizes repeatedly is equity. Low-income residents and people of color are more likely to die in car crashes, and these groups are disproportionately cited for traffic violations. The [Vision Zero Alliance](#), a coalition of safe streets groups, argues the plan does not adequately address the problem of racial profiling when it comes to enforcement. Metro was [recently accused of](#) racial profiling in citing more black riders for fare evasions. “We commend the city for committing to unbiased policing, however, we believe the term fails to go far enough in acknowledging the very real problem of overpolicing in low-income communities and communities of color,” said Vision Zero Alliance’s statement to Curbed. “We look forward to working with the city to embrace truly equitable enforcement strategies with strong metrics to achieve its Vision Zero goals.”



Equitable enforcement is arguably the biggest challenge facing Vision Zero, especially after [LAPD launched jaywalking stings](#) that have resulted in outrageously expensive \$250 tickets. Distracted driving is another area where LAPD has staged [highly publicized crackdowns](#). Although some analysis has tried to pin the uptick in traffic deaths on [smartphone use](#), when looking at LA’s data, it’s not distractions that are to blame, said Reynolds. Low-income residents and people of color are more likely to die in car crashes, and these groups are disproportionately cited for traffic violations. Driver versus driver fatalities (which include motorcycles) went up by almost 50 percent last year: 122 deaths in 2016 compared to 82 in 2015. To Reynolds, that’s a telling statistic about speed. “When you have drivers killing each other like that, they’re not going 40 miles per hour—they’re going 60,” she said. “The speeds on our streets are too fast.” Speed would also explain the increase in pedestrian deaths. If a pedestrian is hit at 40 miles per hour he only has a 10 percent chance of surviving. At 20 miles per hour, it’s 80 percent.

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Narrowing vehicular lanes, adding bike lanes, and making streetscape improvements have been proven to reduce speed *LADOT*. The plan's strategy to reduce speeding includes changes to road design, high-tech speed enforcement tools (which are [illegal right now in California](#)), and, eventually, [embracing autonomous vehicles](#)—which simply won't exceed the speed limit. But the underlying point is even more important: speeding is preventable. The first step towards Vision Zero's success, according to Reynolds, is getting Angelenos to understand that *every crash* is preventable (which is why safety advocates say "crash" not "accident"). That's the culture change that this plan is calling for, and it's the only way LA is going to reduce the number of people dying in its streets.